SHRI K. R. NARAYANAN: So far we have not noticed any invasion of this type in India as I have been making it clear that no specific cases have been brought to our notice so far, but this is a danger to which we have alerted ourselves as well as others concerned. In any case, it is potentially a very dangersous thing not only because of its mischief but the havoc it can do to various establishments, whether it is defenec or airways or any other establishment. So, we are very alert but sof ar we have not seen any sign of invasion.

*24. [*The questioner (Shri Prithibi majhi) was absent. For answer vide cols. 28-29 infra*].

*25. [*Transferred to the 3rd May, 1989*].

*26. [*The questioner (Shri Aladi Aruna alia V. Arunachalam) was absent. For answer vide col. 29 infra*].

Crashing of IAF Plane at Pali in Rajasthan

*27. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether an IAF plane crashed on April 3 in Pali district in Rajasthan; and

(b) whether a court of enquiry has been ordered?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE PRODUCTION AND SUPPLIES IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Sir, there was the fire power demonstration by the Indian Air Force at Tilpat recently which showed that the pilots of IAF were second to none, but the other side is quite unfortunate. There had been a series of accidents, especially in the month of April. It started with a crash in Pali on 3rd April. We had a MIG 21 crash at Pathankot. We had another Canberra crash at Poona and then we had another trainer crash at Madras. All these are known crashes and all in one month. It is not only the question of the month of April, but for the last four to five years we have been noticing a series of air crashes. One disturbing aspect of these accidents is that MIG 21 is involved in most of these accidents. I would like to know if the Defence Ministry is alive to the situation and what steps are being taken to tackle this problem. Is it the problem at Nasik where we are trying to indigenise the MIG 21? If there is any problem there, whether any specific problem has been pointed out and also what steps are being taken to introduce a new trainer. On the one hand we have to fly very very sophisticated aircraft and on the other we find that the trainer aircraft which is required for people to graduate on to this very very sophisticated aircraft, are not up to the mark. I would like to know whether any decision has been taken on a new trainer to teach all our pilots on to a modern aircraft.

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI K. C. PANT): Sir, as my hon. friend knows very well from his own experience, our pilots are really very good and he mentioned the recent demonstration at Tilpat which went off extremely well and which created the desired impact within the country and even outside. But on the question of accidents, there is nocountry in the world, including the most developed, which can altogether avoid accidents and the reason is that whereas in civil flying, the accent is on safety, in military flying the accent is on being to counter situations which arise in warfare and therefore we have to carry both the men and the machine to the extreme limits of endurance. Unless they go through that process, they are not ready for the crisis when it comes. This is the difference and that is why inevitably there are accidents al lover the world. But this does not mean that there is any complacency about it. I agree with my hon. friend that in April

this year there have been too many accidents. Sometimes there is a bunching of such accidents and we shall watch carefully as to whether this continues so that we can analyse. But there is no single reason for these accidents. Therefore, at present, one cannot draw any conclusion from it.

On the question of MIG-21 accidents, in 1987-88, there were 18 and in 1988-89 there were 15 accidents. Actually the number has come down. But, nevertheless, during the year 1988 there was a spate of accidents due to engine failures and malfunctioning of MIG-21 aircraft. Consequently, a joint IAF-HAL-MOD special study team was instituted to look into the problem in December, 1988. That committee under the Chairmanship of Air Marshal Mehra has since submitted it's report making a number of recommendations for action. The HAL and IAF recommendations are under implementation.

On the larger question of an advanced trainer, that decision has not yet been taken because, as my friend knows it is a highly expensive option and we have to weigh that very carefully before we commit our resources to it.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: The hon. Minister has just said that it is a very expensive option. On the one side we have got all the accidents taking place at a heavy rate and even the Air Marchal La'Fontaine Committee had pinpointed one of the causes as the trainer aircraft. I think there should be high priority for that. Air Marshal La'Fontaine Committee had pointed out a few factors as being the cause for accidents—one being the human error, the other being the maintenance aspect of it and the third aspect being the bird hits. I would specifically like to ask what steps have been taken by the Government to reduce this menace of bird hits, whether we have taken any action on the provision that in a ten kilometre zone there will be no slaughter houses etc. I would like to know whether we have looked into that.

And I would request the Minister that there have been so many courts of inquiry after air crashes and also there is the Air Marshal La'Fontaine Committee report which has been held back. I would like to know if this report could be made public. It is so secret that even the pilots do not know what exactly is there in this report. I would like to know whether he would consider making the La'Fontaine Committee Report and also the reports of Courts of Inquiry for the various air crashes public because I think that would start a debate in the Air Force which could be a good thing. Would he consider that?

SHRI K. C. PANT: Sir, the then Air Marshal La'Fontaine was Chairman of this Committee which my hon. friend has referred to. He went into this whole question in depth and he made a very useful report. The recommendations of that report have been gone into and many of them—most of them—in fact were accepted. I have got the numbers here. Some were referred to the Chadha Committee. Dr. Salim Ali was also appointed because the question of management of the environment came in. He was one of the experts and he also gave many recommendations. The States were also involved. A lot has been done in this direction but it has not really proved effective. The reason is, there has to be some control on the environment not only in the immediate vicinity of the airport but beyond, Which is under Municipal Corporations or which is in the rural area. So, this question was considered further and funnels of the landing and take-off of the aircraft were being attended to now on a priority basis in some cases. So far in four airports this was done and so far this has proved to be quite successful. But we will have to watch further, and if this proves successful, we will adopt this approach. But I cannot tell you anything final yet because this is being tried out.

Now, on the La Fontane Committee, I think the officers in the Air Force are very well aware of the recommendations of the La Fontane Committee, not ex-officers—Don't shake your head—but present officers, and they are very well aware of this. If my friend wants, I can give him details of what has been done as a result of the La Fontane Committee report in the field of training and in the other areas which he has tackled. There is no secret in this as such but, as to whether the report is tabled or not, that I will have to go into separately. But, on the conclusions I have absolutely no difficulty in sitting down with him.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: On the air crashes, the findings of the Courts of Inquiry are not made public. Will he consider doing so?

SHRI K. C. PANT: I don't think the Courts of Inquiry's results are ever made public, as far as I know. I will have to find out about that.

श्री सुरेन्द्रजीत सिंह अहलुवालिया: सभापति जी, भारतीय वायुसेना सारे विश्व में अपने अच्छे कामों के लिए जानी जाती है और अपने कौशल तथा एक्सपीरियंस के लिए जानी जाती है जैसे कि हमारे पूर्व संसद सदस्य महोदय ने प्रश्न पूछा और मंत्री जी ने जवाब दिया मेरा सिर्फ एक ही मुद्दा है। मिग-21 का एक्सीडेंट कोई कहता है कि ट्रेनिंग के लिए हो रहा है कोई कहता है इनवायर्नमेंट के कारण हो रहा है, कुछ और कमियां भी सामने आती हैं परन्तु मेरा सिर्फ यह पूछना है, मंत्री महोदय बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि मिग-21 की टेक्नोलाजी हमने विदेश से ली थी उसको जब हमने अपने हिन्दुस्तान एअरोनाटिक्स लिमिटेड में रिफार्म किया तो उसके बाद से एक्सीडेंट शुरू हुए हैं या उसके पहले से हो रहे हैं?

श्री के० सी० पंत: सभापति जी, एक्सीडेंट्स की फिगर्स तो मैंने दी थी। अभी एक्सीडेंट कम हो गये हैं। दो साल की फिगर्स मैंने दी थी मगर एक्सीडेंट हुए हैं। मिग-21 हो या दूसरा कोई जहाज हो पिछले वर्षों में एक्सीडेंट होते रहे हैं। किस जहाज का कब एक्सीडेंट हुआ इसका डिटेल मेरे पास इस वक्त नहीं है लेकिन मैं एक चीज का आपको आश्वासन देना चाहता हूं जैसे मिग-21 में कोई खराबी मालूम हो या मिग-23 में कोई खराबी मालूम हो या हंटर में कोई खराबी मालूम हो तो हम उन देशों के विशेषज्ञों को भी इस बात की जांच करने के लिए अपने साथ शामिल कर लेते हैं या जिसके भी लाइसेंस के तहत मैनुफैक्चर करते हैं उसको भी साथ हम शामिल कर लेते हैं ताकि उनके ज्ञान का लाभ हमको पहुंचे।

श्री सुरेन्द्रजीत सिंह अहलुवालिया: सभापति जी, मेरे सवाल का जवाब नहीं आया। मैंने पूछा है यह एक्सीडेंट जब हम विदेश से इनी जहाजों को लाए थे उस वक्त ज्यादा हुए थे या जब उसमें अमेंडमेंट कर देने के बाद सुधार लाने के बाद ज्यादा हुए हैं। मैं केवल यह फर्क जानना चाहता हूं?

श्री के० सी० पंत: सभापति जी, मैंने बताया है कि मेरे पास पूरे आंकड़े नहीं हैं कि किस साल में मिग-21 के कितने हुए या दूसरों के कितने हुए। मेरे पास कुल आंकड़े तो हैं मिग के अलग नहीं है।

PROF. SOURENDRA BHATTACHARJEE: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Defence Minister pointed out the difference in outlook in the Civil Aviation and the Air Force. He says that in the Civil Aviation the stress is on safety, but in the Air Force the stress is on other factors. My one question in this connection would be whether while laying stress on other things the question of safety is also kept properly in view. That is number one.

The other part of the answer seems to me to be a bit strange. He told something like this, that we are keeping a watch on developments and will draw appropriate lessons. Does it mean waiting anxiously or whatever it is for more accidents to happen and then to draw appropriate lessons?

I hope the Defence Minister does not mean anything like that. I got that impression from what he said. I would request him kindly to clarify that aspect.

SHRI K. C. PANT: Sir, so far as the broad classification of the causes of accidents is concerned, my hon. friend who asked the main question earlier, Mr. Kalmadi, referred to human error, technical error and so on. Now I must assure you that it is not a question of not taking care of safety or not being conscious of the need for safety. Who else will be more concerned with safety than the Chief of the Air Staff or the officers of the Air Force? They are very much concerned with the safety and wellbeing of their own pilots. But, at the same time, they have to prepare them to face war in all weather, during the day time, at the night time, low flying exercises, deep diving exercise, bombing exercise and so on. In this, with modern jets we have to give them the kind of training which will prepare them for a particular contingency which may arise. Therefore, you have to leave it to them. They are the experts. But, I would like to assure you that they are very much conscious of the need to minimise the risk. But the risk cannot be eliminated in this situation.

On the human error question, the main emphasis of the La Fontaine committee was on training. I have here a number of measures that have been taken about the training pattern, about the syllabi and so on, and all these have resulted in improvement.

Then, about technical defects, I have here a series of measures taken in that respect. For instance, restructuring of the Wing Maintenance Organisation, rescheduling of type training of technicians and so on—the list is quite long—and the bird hazards. I have already said what we are doing. So, I assure him that we are very conscious of this. It is with a very heavy heart that I have to report an accident to you. Whenever the paper comes to me and I find that a young pilot has died, you can imagine how I react to it. I feel very sorry about it. A plane is destroyed; it is bad enough. But when a young pilot dies, it is a matter of great sorrow. So, there is no question of any lack of emotion for sentiment in this matter. But the hazards have to be accepted.

SHRI VISHWA BANDHU GUPTA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I wonder if the hon. Minister is aware of the fact that the airmen believe that hese accidents tend to come in 'Threes'. After all, he has said that the accidents may find a particular pattern about these things coming in 'Threes'. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether in the human error situation he has considered the psychological aspect of these accidents. He has been kind enough to say that when a pilot dies or something like that happens, naturally the whole nation is concerned about this. But my question is has he made a study of the cost of these accidents as compared to the kind of improvements that can be obtained by simulators and better facilities for training so that the total amount spent by the nation is less? I would also like to know whether he has instituted some kind of a research in detail for taking care of the birds problem. I know a Bird Committee was set up some time in the past. I would like to know whether the recommendations of the Bird Committee have been evaluated in terms of saving the aircraft.

SHRI K. C. PANT: First of all, the accidents do take place in bunches sometimes, but there is not necessarily an inter-relationship between the causes of accidents in different aircraft. This year, for instance, I have tried to find out if there can be a common cause. I was told that there was no such inter-relationship.

Now, on the question of the environmental factors, I have already indicated the steps taken and I can assure my hon. friend—he himself is a flyer

and flies in the safety of balloons; therefore, he can afford to look at birds as he passes them by—that the problem of jets is quite different. Seriously speaking the point he raised is valid. I also accept his point that the expenditure on simulators etc., though may be heavy, when compared to the loss because of accidents must be taken into account so that we can introduce simulators and other modern techniques to give better training and reduce the risk of accidents.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: What I could understand from the Hon. Minister's statement is that the type of exercises in which our Air Force pilots are engaged are meeting with accidents. There is more accident-proneness than in operating the Civil Aviation Aircraft, as he was explaining to Mr. Suresh Kalmadi. What I want to know is that though our Air Force pilots are very excellent pilots, they have got expertise, but while taking part in the variety of exercises they are meeting with this type of accidents. So, my point is whether in each case of accident there has been an attempt on the part of the Government to identify the reasons for such accidents. What actually I want to know is whether it is because of the human error or because of the shortfall or deficiency in training or because of certain other reasons. So, I would like to know from the Minister whether such type of an attempt is made after each occasion of such accidents and whether the problems have been sought to be identified and also whether rectifying and remedial measures have been taken.

SHRI K. C. PANT: Yes, Sir. Always the causes are analysed and there is a court of inquiry after each accident which goes into the cause of the accident. The La Fontaine Committee to which I made a reference earlier went into—I remember having read the figure this morning—200 and some accidents. It went into the details of over two hundred accidents, as far as I remember, before it gave its conclusions. 213 accidents were analysed by them. So, it is not just a general...

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: But could you group it broadly?

SHRI K. C. PANT: 213 accidents took place between 1972 and 1982. These were earlier accidents. I don't have the details.

SHRI N. K. P. SALVE: I have no pretensions to profundity about the air safety. In the realm of air safety of the Indian Air Force the maximum experience I have is that I have been taken for a ride in the Defence Minister's plane sometimes and the Prime Minister's plane which is very efficiently managed by the Air Force people. But there was a very significant nuance in the question by Mr. Suresh Kalmadi. I would really as an ordinary citizen like to be assured in that aspect and that aspect to which he referred was since we are increasingly indigenising our production in MIGs in Nasik whether there is something wrong in it. That means, is there anything wrong with the designing or the manufacturing or the indigenisation process? We consider that the MIGs are one of the mainstays of our air combat. Therefore, on that I would really like to be assured by the Minister on the designing and the manufacturing aspect of the MIG.

SHRI K. C. PANT: I have just got this information that MIG-21 accidents took place even on imported aircraft. Therefore, it is not just a manufacturing question.

*28. *(Transferred to the 5th May, 1989).*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Q. No. 29.

Enactment for compensation in case of accidental nuclear fall-out

*29. SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state